MIDWEST COMPUTER GENEALOGISTS

NEWSLETTER

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LOOKING FORWARD

There will be no MCG meeting this month. We realized that the third Saturday in April was the day before Easter, and we decided not to meet because some people have family weekends already planned. We will meet again in May.

If you would like to do genealogy on Saturday, April 20, Kathleen Brandt has sent this message: "Please share with your group. The local Heartland Chapter of Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) is hosting a FREE public presentation at the Midwest Genealogy Center Saturday, 20 April 2019, at 10:00AM on Basic Social Media for Genealogists and for those who may wish to pick up a client or two. Our guest speaker is Jenna Mills, a former board member of Mo. Genealogical Society (MoSGA). If anyone wishes to be my guest just have them email me at a3genealogy@gmail.com." Thanks to Kathleen for this invitation.

In October, Chelsea Clarke will be our MCG speaker. She has offered us a number of excellent titles, and we have chosen "Immigration". In November, Beth Foulk will return to present "Where did you come from, Missouri Settlers?". Al Morse will present the talk he planned for February, "Charles McDaniel", when the rest of our presentations are finalized.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Al Morse

After my wife's father, Herbert Newcomb, had his stroke in August, 1969, he could not do much around the farm. His wife, Dorothy (McDaniel) Newcomb, took care of him and the farm. She took care of the cattle and rented the tillable land to another farmer to grow the crops. After her mother, Lillie Ethel (Burke) McDaniel, died on June 6, 1973, she even had her father, James F. McDaniel, move in and took care of him and her husband for a couple of years until her father died on December 10, 1977.

In October, 1978, Dorothy took Herb to see the doctor in Butler, Missouri for a routine appointment. While there, he had a heart problem. He was rushed to the Bates County Hospital in Butler. The doctor performed "Code Blue" on him for 3 or 4 times to revive him. He was placed in the hospital where they did several tests on him. The doctor told the family that he had lung cancer. He remained in the hospital, where he died on December 3, 1978.

Dorothy continued living on the farm and taking care of it like she had been doing. She would go to Butler for shopping. In the mid 1980's, we discovered she had memory problems. We took her to Kansas City for tests. She was diagnosed with Alzheimers disease. We began going to the farm most every weekend, either on Saturday or Sunday. We heard that she had not been driving in a safe way, so I disabled the car. When she tried to start it she caused other problems. She was not happy, so when we went down, we took her to Butler for shopping. My wife, Dorothy Jean, did convince her mother to put her name on all of the bank holdings. She also convinced her mom to put her name on the farm title. Even though she continued to take care of the cattle daily, many times walking the pastures to check on them, she did forget to have a veterinarian come out yearly to vaccinate them.

On January 2, 1990, Dorothy Jean got a call from her cousin, Shirley (West) Tippie. She had gone over to the farm to check on her Aunt Dorothy. She told Dorothy Jean that her mother was not sure if she had been taking care of the cattle. Dorothy Jean went down and they visited and decided that she should go to the Countryview Nursing Home in Prescott, Kansas. After calling and finding out that there was room, they were told they should tell Dorothy that they were going to take her there. Dorothy became furious and refused to go and even became violent. I do not know all of the details as Dorothy Jean refused to tell me everything. I guess that she went to spend the night with Shirley. The next day they went to the farm, but her mother still was refusing to go. After the mail came, and she received her Social Security check, Shirley convinced Dorothy to let her take her to Butler to put the check in the bank. She agreed. Shirley told Dorothy Jean her plan. After going to Butler, Shirley drove to Prescott. Dorothy was getting puzzled and was wondering if they were lost. Shirley pulled into the parking lot of the nursing home. Shirley told her they should go in and ask for help. They went in, and the director took them to the office and quietly told Shirley to leave. We understand that Dorothy became angry and used swear words. , but she remained there. Later that day Shirley and her husband, Billy, herded the cattle into the barnyard. The next day, trucks removed about 45 head of hereford cattle. They were healthy and they sold for a good price.

Dorothy Jean had to get an attorney and go to court so she could be declared as the guardian of her mother. She had to answer many questions. She was declared to be her mother's guardian. The attorney that the court appointed for her mother talked to us afterwards and told us that it should be OK for us to go visit her mother. It had been about 2 weeks since she was admitted to the nursing home. We did go over. We met with her mother, and as long as I was with my wife, everything went fine.

We then had to drive about 90 miles from Independence, Missouri to Prescott to see Dorothy. We usually went on Sunday after church, as we were both active in our church in Independence. We were able to take her mother on car rides to Pleasanton and Fort Scott, Kansas. We never did drive her out by the farm. In the summer of 1991, Dorothy had to go to Memorial Hospital in Fort Scott. She had been refusing to eat and drink. When she returned to the nursing home, she slowly began eating and drinking again.

In 1991, we bought an acre and a half from Shirley and her husband Billie. We built a 2 car garage in the summer of 1993 and in October of 1994 we had a double-wide house delivered and set up. We moved there in October, 1994, as we had both retired. We were then less than 20 miles from the nursing home, and we could go anytime we wanted. Unfortunately, Dorothy usually did not recognize us, as the disease kept taking more and more away from her.

Dorothy Jean would go over and play the piano and the two of us led a bible study once a month. We watched Dorothy go from a physically fit lady to one who needed a walker and then a wheel chair that she could use and then she needed to be pushed. Eventually she even lost the ability to talk and could only blurt out in baby talk. On June 10, 1999, our phone rang at 2 a.m. It was the nursing home telling us that Dorothy Newcomb had died in her sleep.

We still had the 200 acre farm. We had rented the house to a young neighboring couple with 2 children in May, 1990. We continued to rent the tillable land. In 2008 we put the farm on the market. In May we sold 80 acres across from the house. Most of it was tillable and a neighbor who owned all of the land between the house he grew up in and the house he now lived in, except for those 80 acres, bought it. In October, we sold the 40 acres that included the house, the barn, other buildings, 2 ponds, and pasture land to the family that had been living there for 18 years. We continued to own the last 80 acres because we took it off the market. It is the 80 acres where we went down to pick gooseberries, blackberries, and wild plums. We still rent about 20 acres of it for tillable crops to the family that bought the 40 acres. I have talked to our

2 sons, and they really have no interest in the property at this time. So, it is possible we might sell it some day.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Marjorie Slavens

Several genealogy sites have explanations of the meaning of surnames. Of course, we know in English that such names as Baker and Carpenter are professions, Black, White, Brown, and Green are colors, etc. I used to worry about my surname, Slavens. Were my ancestors slaves, were they slave dealers: Neither of these options would have been very favorable. Forest L. Slaven of New Orleans, a descendant of Stewart, child 9 of the immigrant, John Slaven, published a book on the family in 1953. He said the meaning of the name was "snowy mountain". Much better than the alternatives above! It is difficult to establish the validity of this definition, but I like it.

John Slaven, born in Tyrone County, Northern Ireland in 1723, came to Pennsylvania about 1740. He served in the Army in Delaware, and married Elizabeth Stewart there. They moved to Augusta (now Rockingham) County and then to Bath (now Highland) County, Virginia. They had 10 children, and three of them, Reuben, child 7, our ancestor, Isaiah, child 6, and Henry, child 10, used the final "s" at the end of the surname, but the other children did not use it. . The Missouri Slavens, for the most part, were descendants of Reuben, Isaiah, and Henry.

I also looked for my mother's maiden name, Welty. Ancestry says, "Swiss German: from a pet form of the personal name Walther (see Walter). No controversy there! There are several different spellings for this surname too.

First names are also interesting and challenging at times. My great great grandfather, George Washington Slavens, came to Missouri about 1837 and, with his father, John Slavens, son of Reuben and Rebecca Mead Brace Crull, and grandson of the immigrants, John Slaven and Elizabeth Steward, settled in Henry County. From that period, we have found in other lines the names George Washington (G. W.) and Frances Marion (F. M.), a famous Revolutionary War General. When Al Morse discussed one of his ancesters from Bates County, O. H. Perry Miller, I told him I thought it might be Oliver Hazard, a famous military figure in the War of 1812, and his research confirmed the name.

Like many other families, our family used the same first names over and over. When they had only one name each. It is hard, at times, to determine about which David, John, or Abraham we are speaking. We had John, born about 1732 (1794 will), his son, John, born 1765, John, born 1800, and John, born 1835, the older brother of my grandfather, Henry Welty (1837-1911), who came to Missouri about 1868 and settled in Jasper County. John, 1800, had a brother, Abraham, born 1817 in Fairfield County, Ohio, and a son, Abraham, born 1829. John, 1800, married Mary Magdalene (Polly) Miller, and his brother Abraham, 1817, married Polly's niece, Sally Beery, daughter of Polly's sister, Barbara Miller Beery. We always speak of Johns, Abrahams, and Davids with their dates or other identifiable characteristics to avoid confusion.

BLOG RECOMMENDATION: WHEN YOUR FAMILY HISTORY MEETS TECHNOLOGY

Mapping of AncestryDNA data reflects patterns in community immigration. This article features patterns of African-American immigration at different points in U.S. history:
https://www.ancestry.com/corporate/blog/when-your-family-history-meets-technology
(25 Feb 2019)

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INTERVIEWING FAMILY MEMBERS

Marjorie Slavens

In the article on the Slavens family surname from Ancestry.com, it was stated that, “between 1957 and 2004 in the United States, Slavens life expectancy was at its lowest point in 1959, and highest in 2000. The average life expectancy for Slavens in 1957 was 61, and 63 in 2004". That is a little low for the male members of my family, but our direct line does not vary much from that generalization. My great great Grandfather, George Washington Slavens (1829-1907), was 68; his son, John Reuben (1859-1887), died in California at 28 from tetanus; my grandfather, William Howard (1883-1940), died after a heart attack at almost 57, my father, Ralph Westmeier (1907-1983), was 76, and my brother, Dr. G. Everett Slavens (1931-2016) was 85. My father and brother both died of pancreatic cancer.

In May, 1983, I visited my parents in St. Louis. My father had been very ill and was in the hospital in both March and May, but his illness could not be diagnosed; it is one of the most difficult cancers to diagnose. I had my tape recorder with me, and I decided to interview him about his life. I did not

really know how sick he was, but I thought it might be helpful to him to think about his more active days. I am glad I did so because my brother tried to interview him three weeks later, and he was no longer able to answer the questions.

My father was born in Seymour, Indiana on May 28, 1907, where his father worked as a fireman. His parents, Howard and Edna Westmeier Slavens, soon moved to Indianapolis, where his father worked for a grocery company. When his great grandfather, George Washington Slavens, died in Clinton, Henry County, Missouri in 1907 , Howard purchased a small farm, unseen, in Wicks, Arkansas. The area of the farm was very remote, and although he loved the farm, he moved his family to Pittsburg, Kansas, where my father started school. When my father graduated from high school in 1926, they moved to Oklahoma, where both worked for two different oil companies. My grandfather died of heart failure in November, 1940.

My father's happiest years in Pittsburg were while he was in high school. He played the cello in the high school orchestra, where his orchestra leader, J. J. Richards, took his students to regional competitions with such schools as Columbus, Kansas, Joplin and Springfield, Missouri. My father loved music and always remembered his solo in"The Poet and Peasant Overture. He also played in a small group at the Pittsburg Christian Church. My father said he took four years of music, four years of Latin, and two years of Spanish, all of which he enjoyed but none of which really prepared him for his working life. His father worked for the railroad in Pittsburg, and he was on strike in 1922-23. My father, at ages15-16, supported the family. Besides going to school full-time, he swept the school after school, delivered papers morning and evening, delivered groceries, where he learned to drive the truck at age 12, delivered ice, and he also played the drums in the college band because they did not have enough college students who played.

Although he wanted to go to college and to become a lawyer, his father thought a high school education was enough for anyone, and they went to Oklahoma in 1926. When he lost his job at the beginning of the 1930as Depression (last hired, first fired), he went to Asbury, Missouri, where his grandmother, Laura Hesler Slavens Hesler, lived, and he worked in the lead mines. He married my mother October 12, 1930, and he lost his job there 10 days after the wedding. They lived briefly with his parents in Oklahoma and then with her parents in Kansas City, Kansas. He took a course to become a barber, and his father and father-in-law helped him establish a barber shop in Shidler, Oklahoma. With hair cuts at 25 cents and a shave at 15 cents, he could not support his growing family. He had several other jobs, but they decided to return to Pittsburg in the summer of 1939 with their three children, where he managed a tire repair business. He did not have a full-time job with a regular paycheck until April 1, 1940 with the National Lead Company. He took a correspondence course as an electrician, and he worked for that company most of the time in Baxter Springs, Kansas and Waco, Fredericktown, and St. Louis, Missouri until his retirement as Director of Maintenance in 1972.

My father was an avid reader. My colleague in Classics was very impressed with how much my father knew about Biblical Archaeology from his reading. He enjoyed traveling with me to Mexico, Guatemala, and South America, where he was much more appreciative of his visit to Machu Picchu in Peru than I, although I should have had more professional interest in that topic. He was extremely proud of his children and grandchildren. Although I knew some of this information before interviewing him, I learned some new information and was able to preserve for his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren in his own voice these memories of his life. Don't 'wait; do that interview before it's too late!

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